



**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SD NO. 40 (NEW WESTMINSTER)  
Special Open Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 16, 2018 – 7:15 pm**

**School Board Office**

**Location: 811 Ontario Street, New Westminister**

**AGENDA**

*The New Westminister School District recognizes and acknowledges the Qayqayt First Nations, as well as all Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional and unceded territories we live, we learn, we play and we do our work.*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Info</b>	<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Attachment</b>
1. Approval of the Agenda	X			
2. Letter to Minister of Education re Richard McBride Elementary School Replacement	X		M. Gifford	P.1
3. Adjournment				

January 16, 2018

The Honourable Rob Fleming  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

**Re: School District 40 - Richard McBride Elementary School Replacement**

Dear Minister Fleming,

Happy New Year!

This evening, as New Westminister Board of Education's first order of business in 2018, we spent time meeting with students, parents and staff of Richard McBride Elementary School. It is a remarkable school community, where neighbourhood children have found opportunities to learn, grow and thrive for 87 years.

It is also a school community increasingly concerned about the condition of its building, and the safety of its children and staff. And rightly so. Richard McBride was identified as an H-1 school in 2013, and with each passing day, we worsen odds of seismic safety for more than 400 children, staff and their families.

Yes, your government inherited a significant public safety deficit achieved through a remarkable lack of urgency to address seismic risks facing children in more than 150 schools across British Columbia. For too long it put children and educators at undue risk, undermining the credibility of government, and our public education system to provide safe learning environments. To date, we have been spared the full disgrace of this slow pace of action.

When you know better, do better.

As you know, replacement of Richard McBride is the number one priority in New Westminister Board of Education's capital plan. We appreciate your willingness to spend time to listen and learn alongside MLA Judy Darcy, who has been a tremendous advocate for replacement of Richard McBride. We also know you share our concerns, and are entering the 2018 budget with fresh eyes and renewed commitment to children and families in this Province. We urge you to work with your colleagues and fund the McBride replacement project in this current fiscal year and allocate the resources necessary to address the safety of children and staff at Richard McBride, and H-1 schools across this Province.

The work of this government and your Ministry to build trust and strong working relationships with local School Boards and communities they serve over the past 8 months has been impressive. We look forward to building on the success of these early days, to ensure that all children have an opportunity to learn in welcoming, inclusive and safe environments.

In service,



Mark Gifford  
Chair, New Westminister Board of Education

cc: New Westminister Board of Education  
Hon. Judy Darcy, MLA